

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE THEODORE ROOSEVELT DAM

HON. DAVID SCHWEIKERT

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 10, 2011

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the 100th anniversary of Theodore Roosevelt Dam, the cornerstone of water resource operations in Central Arizona. The reliable, sustainable water supply provided by the dam and its reservoir, Theodore Roosevelt Lake, has served as an economic catalyst that spurred decades of growth and helped create the greater Phoenix metropolitan area.

The Salt River Valley, home to metropolitan Phoenix, was little more than a few military outposts and prospecting camps until the first modern canal company was organized in 1867. The success of this venture encouraged more irrigation concerns. Most used the ancient canal networks created and maintained by an indigenous civilization that thrived in the area more than 1,000 years earlier.

As a result of these canal companies, settlements cropped up across the Valley. Local leaders agreed a dam was needed to regulate the flow of the Salt River, which fed the canal networks, to ensure a reliable source of water and sustain development.

A group including a surveyor, journalist, and canal company superintendent identified a possible dam site in 1889 about 80 miles east of Phoenix near the confluence of Tonto Creek and the Salt River. The site was nestled among the Superstition wilderness area, the Sierra Ancha Mountains, and the Salt River Canyon.

Next, residents had to determine how to pay for such a massive undertaking. The Salt River Valley Water Users' Association was organized in 1903 when Valley landowners pledged their property as collateral for a government loan to build the proposed dam. It was a unique arrangement only made possible by an act of Congress the previous year, the National Reclamation Act of 1902.

Dam construction began in 1905 under the supervision of the U.S. Reclamation Service, now the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. When completed in early 1911 and dedicated personally by the president whose name it bears, Roosevelt was the world's largest masonry dam.

Hydroelectric generation from the dam provided early power to, and served as the basis of, power operations for the Salt River Project (SRP), a water and power entity that includes the Salt River Valley Water Users' Association.

Roosevelt Dam has undergone various improvements through the ages, including three separate upgrades of its hydroelectric generating capacity. A major modification of the dam and reservoir was completed in 1996 when the height of the dam was raised by 77 feet and the dam envelope was strengthened.

This modification was part of a comprehensive project to increase water storage, improve dam safety and enhance flood control throughout central Arizona.

Through a partnership with SRP, the federal government, and state and local communities, central Arizona has grown into a vital metropolitan region in the Southwest.

Mr. Speaker, as Theodore Roosevelt Dam embarks on its second century of service to the people of the Salt River Valley, it deserves special recognition for its historic and invaluable contributions to my state.

TRIBUTE TO ALEX GURGANUS

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 10, 2011

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievement of Alex Gurganus, a seventh-grade student at Ames Middle School in Ames, Iowa. Alex was recently named one of only four state winners of the VSA/CVS Call for Art.

Alex's participation in and of itself is stellar. Alex attained this honor despite being visually impaired. In the classroom, Alex requires large print, magnifiers, and a closed circuit TV system to facilitate his learning and compensate for zero vision in his right eye and low visual capacity in his left eye.

However, Alex did not allow these obstacles to deter him as he has been meticulously perfecting his award-winning artwork, "Design by Surprise," for the last three years. When composing a piece of art, Alex must memorize where the colors are on the palette in addition to utilizing a hand-held magnifying dome to ensure perfection.

The example set by this young man demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication and perseverance, and I am honored to represent Alex Gurganus and his family in the United States Congress. I know that all of my colleagues will join me in congratulating him on overcoming such a difficult hurdle as a means to achieve such wonderful results. I speak for all my colleagues as I wish Alex continued success in his future education and career.

FAIR ACCESS TO VETERANS BENEFITS, H.R. 810

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 10, 2011

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, the Fair Access to Veterans Benefits Access Act of 2011, H.R. 810, is a bill that would help our veterans who file appeals before the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. This legislation would require the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans'

Claims to hear appeals of administrative decisions by veterans denying them benefits when circumstances beyond their control render them unable to meet the deadline for filing an appeal.

This legislation would extend the 120-day limit for the filing of an appeal to the Court of Veterans Appeals after a final decision of the Board of Veterans' Appeals upon a showing of good cause for such time as justice may require. The bill considers as good cause the inability of a veteran to file within the 120-day period due to a service-connected disability. The bill would make such extension applicable to appeals of final Board decisions issued on or after July 24, 2008. This bill also requires the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims to reinstate untimely appeals already dismissed as a result of the court's failure to toll the filing period for good cause.

Under the current system, the veterans' appellate processes are very difficult to navigate especially since so many veterans are pro se at that stage. Additionally, as TBI and PTSD are the signature disability of the current conflicts of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation New Dawn, many veterans are also filing claims and appeals while suffering from a physical or mental disability. The adherence to rigid filing deadlines by the CAVC potentially has resulted in the denial of benefits for many veterans. My bill seeks to rectify this issue by allowing the veteran to show "good cause" for missing the filing deadline if related to the veteran's service-connected disability. It is clear to me that Congress intended to allow equitable tolling when it created the veterans' court.

The VSO community wholeheartedly supports this legislation and its costs are likely discretionary. I urge my colleagues to support this bill without delay to give these veterans the access to justice that they deserve.

HONORING LINDSEY WALKER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 10, 2011

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Lindsey Walker. Lindsey is a very special young woman who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Girl Scouts of the USA and earning the high honor of the Gold Award.

Lindsey's outstanding achievement reflects her hard work and dedication. Lindsey has exhibited unique and creative examples of service that have made a difference in her community. I am confident that she will continue to hold herself to the highest standards in the future. This is an accomplishment for which Lindsey can take pride in for the rest of her life.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Lindsey Walker for her accomplishments with the Girl Scouts of the USA

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